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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CONAKRY 000201

SIPDIS

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FOR GUINEA TASK FORCE, AF/W, AF/EX, CA/OCS, DS/IP/AF
PLEASE ALSO PASS TO AID/AFR, PEACE CORPS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/20/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [ELAB](#) [PINS](#) [AEMR](#) [GV](#)
SUBJECT: TFGV01: SITREP 46: GUINEA UNREST, FEB. 20, 2007,
1100 GMT

REF: CONAKRY 195 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: PolOff Jessica Davis Ba, Reason 1.4 (b,d)

Situation on the Ground

¶1. (SBU) With extended non-curfew hours, we are seeing increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Many Guineans are using the opportunity to restock, with moderate activity in markets, gas stations, and other small shops. Most large stores remained closed, as they have been since January 10. The presence of security forces remains at approximately the same level as yesterday. Most of the patrols are being carried out by police and gendarmes. Military continue to man the checkpoint into downtown, but this morning, they were not searching vehicles that passed. Little gunfire was reported from Conakry's neighborhoods.

¶2. (C) Despite the current calm, the security situation in Guinea remains volatile. The "state of siege" is scheduled to lift February 23 unless the National Assembly approves its extension. We are seeking to pin down whether the National Assembly (which is not in session although the constitution requires it to be during an emergency) will in fact take action Friday. Due to the uncertainty of events this weekend, Embassy Conakry has requested the Emergency Survey and Assessment Team (ESAT) to remain at post until Sunday, February 25. This would allow post to maintain the robust communications the team currently offers in case the situation worsens. If the weekend remains calm and order is maintained without further violence, the ESAT team would be prepared to depart as soon as travel is arranged. The Regional Survey Team (RST) here since January 27, has completed its work and will depart Thursday, Feb. 22.

¶3. (SBU) Severe fuel shortages have been reported from the interior. We understand the Fouta Jallon and Forest regions are most affected. Shell and Total have begun making deliveries, under military escort, from the fuel depot downtown to gas stations in Conakry. The companies told us they will resume supplying stations in the interior once the security situation improves.

¶4. (SBU) Some mining companies have resumed their operations. On February 16, the Guinean Bauxite Company (CBG) resumed minimal activities. They have been loading a ship that plans to leave the port in Kamsar today. We understand that the Russian mining conglomerate RUSAL has re-initiated mining in Kindia. The gold mining companies

continue to operate at minimal levels.

Political Update

¶5. (SBU) Presidents Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia and Ahmed Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone are meeting today with Conte and representatives from the government. We understand that other regional presidents (as yet unidentified) may/may visit sometime during the week.

¶6. (SBU) A scheduled February 19 meeting between the presidents of the National Assembly, Supreme Court and Economic and Social Council, the unions, and some religious leaders was canceled. Institution presidents met without the unions to look at a course of action to convince Conte to name a new prime minister, since the unions were unwilling to negotiate over specific candidates without Conte's express commitment to make a new appointment. We understand that the meeting has now been rescheduled to 1600 today, and union leaders are planning to attend. The unions have not held formal internal meetings since the declaration of the state of siege, since freedom of assembly is abrogated. Lacking a forum for discussion, our union contacts agree that their bottom line is for the government to uphold the January 27 agreement, appointing a new prime minister and a broad consensus government.

Mission Operations

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¶8. (U) All American and the majority of locally-engaged staff are at work today, permitting us to turn our attention to non-crisis responsibilities and tasks.

¶9. (U) The Consular Section continues to see a steady but not unmanageable stream of amcits and guardians of amcit children seeking passport renewals and advice. Dakar Consul General Beth Payne departed Conakry this morning after a highly welcome and productive stay with us.
MCDONALD